



TESTIMONY
of the
CONNECTICUT CONFERENCE OF MUNICIPALITIES
to the
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

March 5, 2010

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities is Connecticut's statewide association of towns and cities and the voice of local government - your partners in governing Connecticut. Our members represent over 90% of Connecticut's population. We appreciate this opportunity to testify before this joint committee on issues of concern to towns and cities.

R.B. 5334, "An Act Concerning the Streamlining of State Grants"

CCM supports this bill.

R.B. 5334 would require the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) to develop a process to expedite the "approval and distribution process" for state grants.

Municipal officials and others have long complained about the lengthy time it takes to receive state funding from various state agencies, including OPM, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), and the Department of Transportation (DOT).

Delays in approving and distributing grants means either a delay in providing needed services or the usage of sparse municipal funds to pay for the services until communities may be reimbursed by the State.

Municipal officials understand that part of the delay has to do with staffing (municipal officials have had to lay off many employees as a result of the economy, too). However, much of delay seems to have to do more with duplicative forms, inadequate technology and the need for innovative approaches to ensure that vital grants that ensure the health, safety and welfare of our state are adjudicated in a thoughtful, yet expedited manner.

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If OPM is unable to study and develop policies, the Legislature has an entity available that could give this important issue the right focus and commitment: The Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee. LPRIC could study the best approach for streamlining state grant approval and distribution processes. Not only is the Committee equipped with knowledgeable staff to conduct such a study, but the process ensures input from various municipal officials, nonprofits – and other members of the public.

Thank you.

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If you have any questions, please call Ron Thomas, CCM's Manager of State and Federal Relations, at (203) 498-3000.